

September 2024

WAKE UP! MONTHLY

PROCLAIMING THE REVELATION OF JESUS



Wake Up
America
Seminars

P.O. Box 273
Bellbrook, OH 45305
800-475-0876
wuas@wake-up.org
www.wake-up.org

A Christian's Life

Dear Wake Up Family:

Most mornings, I start my day reading a chapter of the Bible. This morning I ended up reading several, which left me thinking about Paul's experiences portrayed so vividly in Romans, Philippians, and Galatians.

I think there must be hundreds of thousands of Christians who, like Saul, were brought up in the church; then one day, all of a sudden, are made aware of a spiritual need they're not sure how to satisfy. This realization also happens to the non-religious at some point, and it's usually later in life for them too.

(When I use the name Saul, I am referring to Paul in his younger years, prior to becoming a Christian.)

Saul spent most of his life steeped in religion. Yet he was not a happy man or at peace, which sounds a bit odd for a favored person from a chosen people. He knew something inside was missing but didn't know what. He even said as much after his conversion. **"Most of the people of Israel have not found the favor of God they are looking for so earnestly."** (Romans 11:7)

Then in an instant, Jesus introduced himself, transforming Saul the Pharisee into Paul the Christian. I doubt Paul ever forgave himself for the damage he caused, or forgot the faces of the lives he took. And I can understand why. Yet, he was indeed a changed man; for Christianity wouldn't be what it is today without his influence and writings.

What was the secret of Paul's life? And how can we be transformed into what he became?

I imagine his first and hardest step was in realizing that only Jesus can expiate sin; that rigorous religious living doesn't equate to a life of surrendered sanctification. Paul explains, **"For merely listening to the law doesn't make us right with God. It is obeying the law that makes us right in his sight. Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts."** (Romans 2:13–15)

"For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision. No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God.

And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people." (28–29)

In the following chapter, Paul then synthesizes the sometimes-difficult-to-explain gospel. **"But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are."** (Romans 3:21–22)

Now, let's go back in his story a bit. His opinion of himself is unmistakable. **"I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault."** (Philippians 3:5–6)

As a Pharisee, Saul was not lacking in self-esteem.

Verse 7. **"I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done."**

Paul's life changed so dramatically because he realized that being circumcised, being a pure-blooded Israelite, being from the right tribe, being zealous and living in strict compliance with religious restrictions, were all worthless. Many years earlier, Solomon came to the same conclusion and wrote, *Everything is meaningless...completely meaningless.* (Ecclesiastes 12:8)

What power is able to so thoroughly transform a person that he's able to acknowledge this?

Paul continues explaining in verses 8–11. **"Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. I**

want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!"

When Jesus interdicted Saul on the road to Damascus, Saul finally saw himself as he really was, and began to abhor his own efforts to become righteous. He realized that he was lost and condemned because of sin, and needed to be cleansed and set free from the chokehold it had on his life.

That very day, a great struggle began in Paul's life. He began to see what he ought to do and who he ought to be. But he had no power to make those changes in himself. He was helpless. Notice his candor in Romans 7:18–19. **"I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway."** Skip to verses 24–25, **"Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord."**

Paul saw that Jesus is our only hope of getting safely out of this mess called sin. Good intentions, strong desire, or steadfast willpower won't work. Man can't do it. Only the Holy Spirit can do what needs to be done.

Charles Stanley, in his book *The Holy Spirit*, expressed it this way:

"Only the Spirit of God can transform the spirit of man. Work done in the flesh goes no deeper than the emotions. It may look very impressive on the surface, but no one is changed by it. Stirred up, yes. Transformed, no."

That statement still blows me away. Just...wow!

The second and biggest step for Paul was allowing himself to be transformed from the inside out. This is the crux that makes Christianity (the belief, not the institution) so practical and real for me.

I am convinced that there's not one soul, either religious or non-religious, who doesn't feel some spiritual hunger or lack or need in his life. Mankind is intentionally built that way. God has placed something inside of us that draws us to know Him, and the void cannot be filled with anything besides Him. Nothing else will do.

His whole life, Saul had confused love for God with love for his religion. And because institutions inherently institutionalize—and Saul was

immersed in it—he didn't recognize that his religion had become evil. I.e., Saul didn't mind murdering Christians as long as it was sanctioned by the church. Today, socialism has done much the same to religion in the United States.

Sadly, fellow Christians killed in raging conflicts around the world are of no consequence to most Christians in America. Their deaths are hardly even a thought. This, I believe, is because most American Christians don't think in "family of God" terms any longer. Christians in foreign countries are seen now as just foreigners, not Christians. Thank God Paul and his contemporaries didn't see believers that way. Paul instead encouraged fellow Christians to **"Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."** (Ephesians 6:18)

Evil isn't recognized today because religion has been compromised by becoming politicized. Anything is acceptable as long as it's done in the name of *LOVE*. Love for country. Love for some other country. Love for the immoral, the deluded, the invaders. And on and on. But real love is not indulgence of wrongdoing. Love is doing what's right, even when it's difficult, embarrassing, even humiliating.

John 2 tells the story of when Jesus cleared the temple. Read it. Jesus refused to indulge in what had become acceptable. He instead said, *"You're dishonoring my Father's house by being here. For that, you deserve a thrashing."* And He gave them one.

Jesus could have winked at their bad behavior; the priests had. Besides:

The activities were a windfall for temple coffers; the law required specific animals be sacrificed so the out-of-towners would certainly need one; surely the merchants were providing an essential service.

Their reasoning for allowing such atrocious behavior must have gone something like that. But Jesus wouldn't accept excuses. He loved his Father more. And He demanded the honor due His Father be shown.

This past week, during the opening ceremonies at the Olympic Games in Paris, the drag-queen mockery of the Last Supper is of the same kind of denigration. A "Christian pastor" even wrote a message on social media justifying the sacrilege:

"I'm a pastor, and I have something to say. Christians that get online and spew hate toward nonbelievers anger me much more than nonbelievers spewing hate toward my beliefs. I

have no idea what the table at the Olympics was supposed to represent, as the official statement contradicts the larger opinion. But what I can say is that every single person at that table would have been invited to Jesus' table. Jesus not only spent His time on earth with sinners, He invited them to the very table everyone assumes the Olympic table represents."

His words translated into plain English mean:

"I'm better than other Christians because I don't say a word when evil people blaspheme Jesus. Christ told sinners to sin no more, but since that's not fashionable today I won't mention it. What I will do instead is try to win points with those depraved people by condemning my fellow Christians for acknowledging how despicable their actions were. I'll even "tell a porky" and say I don't know for sure that those heathens were mocking the Last Supper with their parody. But if they were, so what?"

This pastor's glib acceptance of such depravity and sacrilege is broadly why Christianity is failing today. The church Christ began 2000 years ago—the one Paul was beaten for growing—now panders to foolishness for fear of being called *distasteful names*. Early Christians stood firm when faced with decapitation, being burned alive, and eaten by animals. Today, the majority cower when threatened with name-calling. These "Christians" are so warped in what is right or wrong that they even attack fellow Christians for calling sin, sin. How absurd.

What has happened to preachers today? Wake Up America! This is what divide and conquer looks like. Satan knows what he's doing.

Pastors like the one above are also why we hear the cliché "God wants us just as we are." This is then understood to mean, "*Remain as you are. There's no need to change today. Live like hell, just come to church. Change later when it's convenient.*"

But the truth is, God *doesn't* want us as we are. He *does* invite us to come to Him from wherever we are in life, but He doesn't allow us to stay in that place and still be called *heirs of the promise*. That's why we have to be transformed. Jesus expects us to come to Him, and begin becoming *like* Him.

Paul cautioned the Corinthian converts who apparently were enjoying their newfound Christian freedom, **"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived!**

The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, passive [effeminate] homosexual partners, practicing [dominant] homosexuals, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, the verbally abusive, and swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God. Some of you once lived this way. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9–11)

This is describing the school of sanctification Larry talked so often about. This day-by-day experience is the constant revelation of sin to us by the Holy Spirit. And just like school, there's always more homework tomorrow. Think about it. If God showed us every mistake, every weakness, every sin in one moment, we would be crushed by discouragement. We'd give up and quit.

But God doesn't do that. He reveals our mistakes and sins one at a time. Today the Holy Spirit may show me something that is wrong. Tomorrow He may show me something else. Next week I may get another revelation. This takes a lifetime. But Jesus doesn't expect us to take a lifetime to overcome the sin once it has been revealed to us. When we know something is wrong, we must act immediately and ask Him to intercede. God wants to see progress. We should want to make progress.

John 8 tells a story of the entrapment of a woman. Read it. It says more than most realize.

Jesus wants us to come to Him, stop sinning, become like Him, and share Him with others. That's what Paul did. But when those who claim to promote Christ defend Satan instead, who can God trust?

God knows religion has been compromised. It's why He rejects any religious body as a means to share His message during the end time. Instead, individuals with the character of Paul, John the Baptist, and Elijah will be tapped to give the gospel message to a world full of "hungry" people— its concept explained so simply that even little children will be able to understand it.

I'll close this article with Luke's account of Paul's conversion. The secret to receiving salvation, if I may call it such, is referenced twice in the story.

“As he [Saul] was approaching Damascus on this mission [to catch, imprison, and kill Christians], a light from heaven

suddenly shone down around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?'

'Who are you, lord?' Saul asked.

And the voice replied, 'I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting! Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'

Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, 'Ananias!'

'Yes, Lord!' he replied.

The Lord said, 'Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now. I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again.'

'But Lord,' exclaimed Ananias, 'I've heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name.'

But the Lord said, 'Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel. And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake.'

So Ananias went and found Saul." (Acts 9)

Did you notice what each man did? Each one responded to what they were told. *They did as they were told, when they were told!* It is this "go, be, do" attitude that God wants from us. What else can we offer Him?

Rex

(For many years, the NLT has been my favorite Bible. Its readability is simply the most enjoyable. I also keep a NET close by for its notes. No other translations' notes come close to matching it, and its readability is superb. If you're searching for a Bible, try a NET.)

PRAYER PRIORITIES

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



www.joyfultoons.com © 2014 Michael D. Waters

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. – EPHESIANS 6:18 NIV

The “5 S’s” Booklet Sets
Six Sets Just \$7.00 for Shipping



In 1990, Wake Up printed a book titled The Revelation of Jesus which presented the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. In this book, Larry presented five key principles necessary to understand Bible prophecy. Later, in 1996, Wake Up published a series of brochures we called the 5 “S” series. The S’s represented the first letter of the five doctrines—Second Coming, Sabbath, State of Man at Death, Sanctuary, and Salvation. We have revised the material covering these important foundational principles and they are in five booklets. These booklet sets are a great introduction to prophecy and you can buy six sets of the five booklets to share for the low shipping cost of \$7.00!

Call 800-475-0876 or visit wake-up.org/shop to order



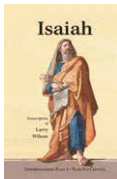
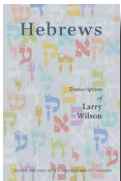
Prophetic Multi-Book Packs



Bible Study Books

Warning Revelation is About to be Fulfilled	\$4 each	\$17/44 Book Case
Bible Stories with End Time Parallels	\$4 each	\$22/40 Book Case
The Untold Story of Jesus	\$4 each	\$21/40 Book Case
No More Delay	\$4 each	\$16/30 Book Case
The Antichrist & the Mark of the Beast	\$4 each	\$17/72 Book Case
Jesus The Alpha and The Omega	\$4 each	\$25/32 Book Case
Daniel Unlocked for the Final Generation	\$4 each	\$19/22 Book Case
A Study on the Seven Trumpets, Two Witnesses, and Four Beasts	\$4 each	\$24/34 Book Case
The Lamb's Book of Life	\$4 each	\$23/34 Book Case

Other Study Materials



Hebrews, Isaiah, or Ezekiel

- \$6 each
- \$35 Box of 10
- \$100 box of 30

The Prophetic Keys to the Future

- \$8 each
- \$125 Box of 30



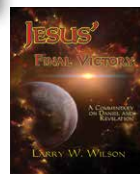
Righteousness by Faith

- \$7 each
- \$85 Box of 24



Jesus' Final Victory

- \$5 each
- \$20 Box of 8



Call 800-475-0876 or visit

Booklets to Share

Single Booklet Boxes – \$7.00 Shipping
 4 Boxes – \$15.00 or 8 Boxes – \$22.00 Shipping
 Booklet #s 1 - 44, 46 - 47*

-
- | | |
|--|---|
| #5 – <i>Are You Ready for the Second Coming</i> (35) | #27 – <i>Gideon–Reluctant Warrior</i> (35) |
| #6 – <i>Sunday or Saturday Which is Holy?</i> (30) | #28 – <i>Elijah the Tishbite</i> (30) |
| #7 – <i>Does Life End at Death</i> (30) | #29 – <i>Saul–Good Heart Wrong Head</i> (28) |
| #8 – <i>The Temple of God</i> (22) | #30 – <i>John the Baptizer</i> (35) |
| #9 – <i>Was Jesus Created</i> (60) | #31 – <i>Pilate's Judgment</i> (45) |
| #10 – <i>Salvation: Faith? Grace? Works?</i> (40) | #32 – <i>Noah and the Pig Pen</i> (45) |
| #11 – <i>Does God Kill People?</i> (30) | #33 – <i>Moses and the Mark</i> (40) |
| #12 – <i>Is the Rapture a Hoax?</i> (30) | #34 – <i>Predestination vs. Free Will</i> (40) |
| #13 – <i>The World Wars and Armageddon</i> (25) | #35 – <i>Once Saved–Always Saved</i> (40) |
| #15 – <i>Four Beasts of Revelation</i> (30) | #36 – <i>The Properties of Faith</i> (35) |
| #17 – <i>The Israel of God Today</i> (30) | #37 – <i>The 144,000 Will Soon Appear</i> (38) |
| #18 – <i>What Changed at the Cross?</i> (30) | #38 – <i>The Cities of Refuge</i> (38) |
| #19 – <i>Interpretation and Inspiration</i> (30) | #39 – <i>Protestant Protests</i> (35) |
| #20 – <i>Angry with God</i> (30) | #40 – <i>When God Breaks His Silence</i> (35) |
| #21 – <i>Seven Trumpets</i> (30) | #41 – <i>What Must I Do to be Saved</i> (30) |
| #22 – <i>Sealing God's People</i> (30) | #42 – <i>Is Sin Forgiven</i> (30) |
| #23 – <i>Which Israel Will be saved?</i> (40) | #43 – <i>The Sealed Book</i> (25) |
| #24 – <i>Daniel – A Test of Loyalty</i> (30) | #44 – <i>The Trinity–One God or Three</i> (20) |
| #25 – <i>A Faith More Precious than Gold</i> (30) | #45 – <i>The 2,300 Days of Daniel 8:14</i> (25)* |
| #26 – <i>Esther–Beautiful Savior</i> (30) | #46 – <i>Four Messages</i> (40) |
| | #47 – <i>Demonic Possession – Through the Ages</i> (40) |

PROCLAIMING THE REVELATION OF JESUS

Wake Up America Seminars (WUAS) is both a nonprofit and a nondenominational organization. With God's blessings and the generosity of many people, WUAS has distributed millions of pamphlets, books and videos around the world during the past 35 years. WUAS is not a church and is not affiliated, endorsed, or sponsored by any religious organization. Our mission is not to convert the world to our point of view. WUAS does not have members nor offer any kind of membership.



Wake Up
America
Seminars

P.O. Box 273
Bellbrook, OH 45305
800-475-0876
wuas@wake-up.org
www.wake-up.org